

# Borough of Welshpool.

*Annual Report of the Medical Officer of Health for the  
Year ending December 31st, 1937.*

*To the Sanitary Authority of the Borough of Welshpool.*

Mr. Mayor, Aldermen and Councillors,

I have much pleasure in submitting my Annual Report and Vital Statistics on the Public Health of Welshpool for the year ending December 31st, 1937, drawn up on the lines indicated in Circular 1650 (Wales).

## SECTION A.

Area (in acres), 20,426.

Registrar General's estimate of the resident population is 5,277 for 1937.

Number of inhabited houses, 1,698.

Rateable value and sum represented by a penny rate £24,091—£100.

The district is practically entirely agricultural.

## VITAL STATISTICS.

		M.	F.
Live Births—Legitimate	... ..	42	47
Illegitimate	... ..	1	3
		—	—
Total	... ..	43	50 — 93

Birth Rate per 1,000 of the estimated resident population—17.6.

					M.	F.	
Deaths	...	...	...	...	36	44	— 80

Death Rate per 1,000—15.1.

<sup>No</sup>  
~~One~~ death from puerperal pyrexia.

Death Rate of infants under one year—10.7 per 1,000 live births.

Deaths from cancer—19.

Deaths from Measles—Nil.

Deaths from Whooping Cough—1.

Deaths from Diarrhoea (under 2 years of age)—Nil.

In connection with the figures given previously of the estimated population by the Registrar General for 1937, it may be of interest to glance at the census returns for Welshpool for the past 50 years:—

1881	...	...	...	7107
1891	...	...	...	6489
1901	...	...	...	6121
1911	...	...	...	5922
1921	...	...	...	5694
1931	...	...	...	5639
1937	estimated	5277	being a decrease of 1830 in the 56 years.	

## SECTION B.

Part time Medical Officer—J. A. Crump, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., Lond.

Part time Sanitary Inspector—W.M. Evans, D.S.O., P.A.S.I., M.I.M.  
& C.Y.E.

Water Inspector—E. B. Davies.

There have been no changes in the services provided in the area under the following heads:—

- (a) Laboratory.
- (b) Ambulance.

- (c) Nursing in the Home.
- (d) Treatment Centres and Clinics.
- (e) Hospitals.

## SECTION C.—SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA.

(i) WATER.—There was no shortage of water during the year under review. The total rainfall for the year, as registered at the Boys' County School was 30.26 inches; up to the end of September the total rainfall was 22.72 inches; in spite of this, the three reservoirs were overflowing on the 26th July. At the end of the dry period in October the two upper reservoirs were still full and the lower one was only 3ft. 8in. below top water level. This represents a drop of under three million gallons in the total storage which is approximately 10,000,000 gallons.

The minimum gauging of the water entering the reservoirs was 50,000 gallons per day; the average consumption was approximately 80,000 gallons per day.

A sample of the raw water from the pools was submitted for bacteriological analysis to ascertain the quality of the water from the gathering grounds; and in addition, two samples were taken from the sources of St. Garmon's Well and Madeley's Spring and sent for analysis. Both were satisfactory.

Experiments have been made to ascertain the effect of chlorine applied in different ways; in all, nine samples were submitted; in two the water was treated by Chloros *prior* to filtration and the results were not satisfactory; in the remaining seven the chloros was added *after* filtration and in all cases the results were good. A scheme was submitted to the Council based on the experiments and as a result an application was made for a loan to cover the purchase of suitable chlorinating plant. The Ministry have now suggested that the Council should engage an expert to report on the question of treatment and the possibilities of preventing pollution of the raw water.

Mr. R. F. Baker of Birkenhead has been appointed and has made his inspection of the gathering grounds.

The question of supplying the higher levels by hydrostat to enable building development to take place on the lands between the 400 and 500 ft. contours has come up for consideration; also a scheme for conveying the spring water from St. Garmon's Well and Madeley's Spring direct to the lands above the present gravitation line. Mr. Baker has been asked to deal with this matter and has been supplied with all the data to enable this to be done.

Extensions of the water main have been made to new houses in Lambert Road, and the Council's new estate at Bronybuckley.

**GUILDSFIELD & GROES.**—The supply at these villages has been constant. The 150,000 gallon storage tank was overflowing throughout the summer; the minimum gauging of the springs, which is checked monthly, being 1,570 gallons per day.

The water main was extended along the Pool Road as far as the new Police House built by the County Council.

(ii). **DRAINAGE AND SEWERAGE.**—The town sewerage system functioned satisfactorily throughout the year; during heavy storms the sewers become overcharged and "backing up" occurs for short periods.

The main sewer in Salop Road was found to be silting up; this length has been cleaned and is now in good order.

Extensions of the sewers have been made to the new houses in Lambert Road; also at Westwood Park and Erw Wen.

The Council's Housing Estate at Bronybuckley has also been connected up, this work being done by contract.

All sewage is discharged into the River Severn and samples taken

by the County Medical Officer of Health show that the river water is quite satisfactory as far as the length in the Borough is concerned.

There has been no flooding in the built up area of the Town; the cleaning of the bed of the River Severn by the Catchment Board has had beneficial results in the lower lying portions of the valley. Flood water gets away more quickly and is almost always confined to the river bed.

2. RIVERS AND STREAMS.—These duties are carried out by the County Medical Officer of Health.

3. (i) CLOSET ACCOMMODATION.—At the end of the year there was no material change in the number of closets in the Council's Area; the position will be very much improved when the tenants are moved into the new houses at Bronybuckley.

(ii). PUBLIC CLEANSING.— There is no change in the method of collecting house refuse; weekly collections are made from the built-up area of the town; the fortnightly collection in the villages of Groes and Guilsfield has been extended to include the houses at Groespluan.

Collection is by motor lorry with covered top, and disposal is by tipping on to the waste land now liable to flood. The tip is in a satisfactory condition.

A special collection of paper from shops is also made weekly; a condition is made that all paper must be bagged, the bags being returned to the traders after the paper has been burnt.

The streets of the town are kept in a fairly satisfactory condition; waste paper baskets have been placed along the main streets but insufficient use is made of them as yet, by the public. Special arrangements are made for clearing up and disinfection of the streets after the markets; these are satisfactory but there should be better control of the stall holders and a better system for the prevention of their littering up the centre of the town with waste paper, etc.



Disinfection of the Poultry Markets to comply with the requirements of the Poultry Disinfection Order of 1936 has been carried out weekly.

(iii). SANITARY INSPECTION OF THE AREA.—Summary of Sanitary Inspector's visits and notices served:—

Water supply	...	...	...	991
Rats and mice	...	...	...	35
Bakehouses		...	...	7
Drainage	...	...	...	81
Schools	...	...	...	3
Miscellaneous		...	...	19
Refuse Collection	...	...		44
Tents, Vans and Sheds		...		6
—				Total: 1186
Number of informal notices served	...	...		243
Do.		compiled with		222
Number of statutory notices served	...	...		6
Do.		complied with		4

(iv.) SHOPS.—An Inspector was appointed on 1st April, 1936; his reports have been satisfactory and no action by the Council has been necessary.

(v.) SMOKE ABATEMENT.—No action.

(vi.) SWIMMING BATHS.—A scheme for providing an open-air swimming bath at an estimated cost of £3,000 has been considered by the Council. The suggested site is immediately adjacent to the present Recreation Grounds, and at the rear of the County Schools.

The Council have approved the scheme in principle and have submitted same to the National Fitness Committee for Wales, with an application for a grant towards the cost of construction.

(vii.) ERADICATION OF BED BUGS.—There has only been one com-

plaint which necessitated action. The house was treated with a vermicide and the results were satisfactory as no further complaints were made.

1. (a) Number of Council houses found to be infested	...	Nil
Do.	disinfested	... Nil

(b) Number of other houses found to be infested	...	...	1
Do.	disinfested	...	1

3. The method employed was spraying with Vermicide.

3. The Town Council have appointed a Sub-Committee to consider the methods to be adopted for ensuring that the belongings of tenants are free from vermin before removal to Council Houses; the Sanitary Officers have been instructed to collect information as to the methods adopted by the larger authorities and this information will be available shortly.

4. No decision has yet been made as to whether the work will be carried out by the Local Authority or by a Contractor.

5. A suggestion has been made that as soon as the results of the Inquiry into the Council's Slum Clearance proposals are known, a Meeting should be called to which all the new tenants would be invited; and that they would be addressed by one of the Public Health Officials who had specialised in the question of bugs and their eradication. This suggestion will be considered by the Sub-Committee mentioned in Para 3 (vii) (3).

**RAT WEEK.**—The Rat Week Campaign which started in 1934 was again organised on the same lines as previously. All Borough rate-payers who apply to the Sanitary Officers are supplied with free baits; this year 1,600 baits of Kearwell's Rat Bait, a red squill preparation recommended by the Ministry of Agriculture, was used; 550 of the baits were taken by rats; the remainder were destroyed. The town refuse tip was treated twice and also the new housing site at Bronybuckley.

The importance of the action taken by the Council under this heading cannot be over-estimated, and if similar action could be taken half-yearly, the results should amply repay the costs.

4. SCHOOLS.—Periodical visits have been made to the elementary and county schools, but no action was found necessary.

## SECTION D.—HOUSING.

### 1. INSPECTION OF DWELLING HOUSES DURING THE YEAR.

- |   |      |
|---|------|
| (i). (a) Total number of dwelling houses inspected for housing defects (under Public Health or Housing Acts)...   | 951  |
| (b) Number of inspections made for the purpose ... ..   | 1223 |
| (ii). (a) Number of dwelling houses (included under sub-head (1) above which were inspected and recorded under the Housing Consolidated Regulations, 1925 ... | Nil  |
| (b) Number of inspections made for the purpose ... ..   | Nil  |
| (iii) Number of dwelling houses found to be in a state so dangerous to health as to be unfit for human habitation ... ..                                      | 129  |

NOTE.—In 1934, the Council condemned the number of houses under their slum clearance scheme. The Public Inquiry was held in May, 1938 but the results are not yet known.

- |   |     |
|---|-----|
| (iv). Number of dwelling houses (exclusive of those referred to under the preceding sub-head) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation ... | Nil |
|---|-----|

### 2. REMEDY OF DEFECTS DURING THE YEAR WITHOUT SERVICE OF FORMAL NOTICES.

Number of defective dwelling houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or their Officers ... ..	37
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## 3. ACTION UNDER STATUTORY POWERS DURING THE YEAR.

(a). Proceedings under Section 9, 10 and 16 of the Housing Act, 1936:—

(1). Number of dwelling houses in respect of which notices were served requiring repairs ... Nil

(2). Number of dwelling houses which were rendered fit after service of formal notices:—

(a) By Owners ... Nil

(b). By Local Authority in default of owners ... Nil

(b). Proceedings under Public Health Acts:—

(1). Number of dwelling houses in respect of which notices were served requiring defects to be remedied ... 13

(2). Number of dwelling houses in which defects were remedied after service of formal notices:—

(a) By owners ... 12

(b). By Local Authority in default of owner ... Nil.

(c) By Occupier ... 1

(c). Proceedings under sections 11 and 13 of the Housing Act, 1936:—

(1). Number of dwelling houses in respect of which demolition Orders were made ... Nil

(2). Number of dwelling houses demolished in pursuance of Demolition Orders ... Nil

(d). Proceedings under section 12 of the Housing Act, 1936:—

(1). Number of separate tenements or underground rooms in respect of which Closing Orders were made ... Nil

- (2). Number of separate or underground rooms in respect of which Closing Orders were determined, the tenement or room having been rendered fit ... Nil

#### 4. HOUSING ACT, 1935, OVERCROWDING.

- (a). (i) Number of dwellings overcrowded at the end of the year ... 68
- (ii) Number of families dwelling therein ... 68
- (iii) Number of persons dwelling therein ... 350
- (b). Number of new cases of overcrowding reported during the year ... Nil
- (c). (i) Number of cases of overcrowding reported during the year ... Nil
- (ii) Number of persons concerned in such Cases ... Nil
- (d). Particulars of any cases in which dwelling houses have again become overcrowded after the Local Authority have taken steps for the abatement of overcrowding ... Nil

#### SECTION E.—INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD.

(a). MILK SUPPLY.—All retailers of milk in the built-up area of the Borough, with the exception of two, are Accredited Producers. Steps have been taken to get these two producers to apply for a licence, but without success.

The number of Accredited Producers in the Borough is 17; the number of inspections of their premises is thirteen, and all the improvements asked for by the Sanitary Officers to bring the buildings and the method of dairying up to the required standard have been carried out.

The buildings and herds of these Accredited Producers are subject to a quarterly inspection by the County Veterinary Officer, and the County Council have a special Committee for dealing with bad cases. Up to date, it has been found necessary to call this Committee together only once, and this was for a case outside the Borough; the standard of milk produced on these premises can therefore be taken to be satisfactory.

There are two Producers retailing T.T. milk in the Borough, Mr. T. Sheppard of the Moors, is the only one resident in the Borough; the other is Major W. M. Dugdale of Llanfyllin. These producers submit half-yearly certificates of their Tuberculin Test to the County Council and the County Veterinary Officer makes arrangements to inspect the herds periodically.

A further point of interest in the Milk production of the County is that there are now 24 attested herds in Montgomeryshire; of these two are in the Borough, that of Mr. W. A. Tutton of Buttington New Hall and Mr. J. C. Owen, Bridge-end Farm, Pool Quay.

(b). MEAT.—All slaughter-houses in the built-up area have been inspected during the year. The standard of meat retailed is excellent, and no action has been necessary.

There have been several complaints of the sanitary conditions of some of the private slaughter-houses in the built-up area, and as a result the Council called for a report on each of these premises. These reports have been considered by the Council and as a result a Sub-Committee has been appointed to consider the possibility of providing a central slaughter-house. This Committee have inspected the abattoir at Shrewsbury as a preliminary to their investigations and have instructed the Borough Surveyor to prepare plans and estimates of suitable premises in Welshpool. This report is now ready for consideration, and it is to be hoped that the Council will be able to carry out the main provisions. With the goodwill of the local butchers, there seems to me to be no reason why the scheme should not be adopted; in my opinion it would be a decided step forward as the unsatisfactory conditions now existing at the private slaughter-houses

would be removed and the obvious benefits of a central slaughter house secured.

The approximate number of animals killed during the year in the various slaughter-houses is as follows:—

Bovines, Cattle (excluding cows), 416; Cows, Nil; Calves, 30.  
 Sheep and Lambs, 2756; Pigs, 1404.

Approximately 5 per cent. of the above carcasses have been examined, and no diseased meat of any kind was found.

There have been periodic visits of the food brought into the Markets for sale.

Action was found to be necessary in only one case. Unfit fish was surrendered by a retailer; this was destroyed and the usual certificate given.

(c). ADULTERATION, ETC.—All work under the Food and Drugs (Adulteration) Act, 1928; the Artificial Cream Act, 1929; the P.H. (Condensed Milk) Regulations, 1923 and 1927; the P.H. (Dried Milk) Regulations 1923 and 1927 and the P.H. (Preservatives, etc., in food) Regulations, 1925 to 1927 is carried out by the County Council.

(d). CHEMICAL AND BACTERIOLOGICAL EXAMINATION OF FOOD.—There are no laboratories in the Borough.

(e). NUTRITION.—The County Medical Officer of Health attends the Health Centre at the Victoria Memorial Hospital fortnightly. He is accompanied by the County Health Visitor and Inspector of Midwives and all infants taken there are weighed, and the parents advised as to the best method of feeding.

The advantages of this service are realised and highly appreciated.

(f). SHELL-FISH.—There are no shell-fish beds in the Borough and no action has been necessary under the P.H. (Cleansing of Shell-fish) Act, 1932 or the P.H. (Shell-fish) Regulations, 1934.

#### SECTION F.—Prevalence of Infectious Diseases.

During 1937 there was almost a complete absence of notifiable Infectious disease in the Borough. No cases were admitted to Hospital and there were no deaths. The only puerperal pyrexia case notified was due to mammary abscess. This is most satisfactory.

There was one case of Scarlet Fever.

Three cases of Pneumonia.

Two cases of Erysipelas.

PREVENTION OF BLINDNESS.—No action taken.

#### TUBERCULOSIS.

No action has been taken under the Public Health (Prevention of Tuberculosis) Regulations, 1925, or under Section 62 of the Public Health Act, 1925 or Section 172 of the Public Health Act, 1936.

Age Periods.	New Cases.				Deaths.			
	Resp'tory.		Non- Resp'tory.		Resp'tory.		Non- Resp'tory.	
			M.	F.			M.	F.
0 ... ..								
1 ... ..								
5 ... ..								
15 ... ..								
25 ... ..	I							
35 ... ..		I						
45 ... ..	I							
55 ... ..					I			
65 and upwards					I			
Totals ...	2	I			2			



All tuberculosis deaths, two only, had been notified to me.

Notification of tuberculosis in the area is satisfactory.

In conclusion, may a thank you for your kind consideration and for the great help I have received from your Town Clerk, Borough Surveyor and Water Inspector, more especially in the very considerable work entailed in the Slum Clearance Scheme.

I am, Mr. Mayor, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

J. A. CRUMP.



